

Theme: The continental divide of life is where we place our confidence – ourselves and our own righteousness, or Christ and His righteousness.

I. Intro – Continental Divide

- A. Our trip out west
- B. Seeing the Continental divide
- C. Today's text – a theological continental divide
- D. Why is Paul so upset? What is at stake?

II. Paul and the Judaizers

- A. An abrupt shift in tone (2:19-30; vv1-2)
 - 1. Commendation of Timothy & Epaphroditus
 - 2. Finally (for the rest), rejoice, same things (v1)
 - 3. Watch out, harsh rhetoric (v2) – the Divide!!!
- B. Paul and the Judaizers
 - 1. Judaizers – Jesus + Jewish law & rites
 - 2. Look out (3x); literary device; harsh terms
 - a. Dogs – unclean scavengers; Gentile term
 - b. Evil workers – they thought worked righteous
 - c. Mutilators – circumcision – Lev 21:5; 1Ki 18:28

- 3. Paul's wish for them- Galatians 5:12

C. The true people of God (note chiasm)

- 1. Christians true circumcision (v3; Rom 2:28-29)
- 2. People of God worship by the Spirit of God
- 3. People of God glory in Christ Jesus
- 4. People of God put no confidence in the flesh
- 5. Chiasm of two real points to be developed

D. Continental divide – where is your confidence?

III. Paul's Personal Story and Example

- A. Paul's reasons for confidence in the flesh (v4)
 - 1. Four reasons from heritage (v5) - build
 - 2. Three reasons from personal effort (v5b-6)
 - 3. Paul had more than the Judaizers!!!
- B. Paul's only confidence – Jesus!
 - 1. All profits is now loss – because of Christ (v7)
 - 2. Key theme – vv7-8
 - 3. Still has circumcision, etc. – but no boast
 - 4. Everything now loss, rubbish – except Christ (v8)

5. All done to gain Christ – emptied hands (v8)
- C. Continental divide – two types of righteousness (v9)
 1. My righteousness, from law OR
 2. God's righteousness, through faith
 3. Now all about gain. know, found, etc in Christ

IV. Applying the Word – Confident in Christ

- A. Do we see the constant struggle for the Gospel?
 1. This issue throughout the NT – 'write again'
 2. This is why we needed a Reformation
 3. We must be vigilant – natural tendency for human boasting
- B. Where is our confidence – Christ or us?
 1. We can only have confidence in one or other
 2. Jesus + anything = NO JESUS
 3. Not baptism, tongues, political party, etc. – JESUS
 4. Is your hand EMPTY – only looking to Christ?
- C. Eucharist – thanks be to God for Christ!

Our Confidence in Christ - Holding on to the Gospel

Philippians 3:1-11

April 6, 2008

Priests must not shave their heads or shave off the edges of their beards or cut their bodies.

Leviticus 21:5

So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed.

1 Kings 18:28

4 times in LXX – all negative

12 As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!

Galatians 5:12

28 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. 29 No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

Romans 2:28-29